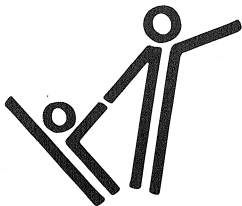


The Child Support Enforcement program is a Federal/State/local effort to collect child support from parents who are legally obligated to pay. Its goals are threefold: to ensure that children are supported by their parents, to foster family responsibility, and to reduce the costs of welfare to the taxpayer. State enforcement programs locate absent parents, establish paternity, establish and enforce support orders, and collect child support payments. While programs vary from State to State, their services are available to all parents who need them.

Established in 1975 as Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, the Child Support Enforcement program functions in all States and territories. It is usually administered through State and county Social Services Departments, though many States have agreements with prosecuting attorneys, other law enforcement agencies, and officials of family or domestic relations courts to carry out the program at the local level.

The role of the Office of Child Support Enforcement, in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is to help States develop, manage, and operate their programs effectively and according to the rules of Federal law. The Office pays for a major portion of State program operating costs, provides policy guidance and technical assistance to enforcement agencies, conducts audits and educational programs, supports research, and promotes initiatives for program improvement.



Handbook on Child Support Enforcement

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Child Support Enforcement
Washington, D.C. 20447

FOREWORD

In this *Handbook on Child Support Enforcement* you will find a "how-to" guide for getting the child support payments which are owed to you and your children. We have written it to help close the gap between the dollars owed the children of America and the dollars paid by the parents who should help support them. Although the booklet is written for people who are working through their local Child Support Enforcement (CSE) offices, it will also be useful to parents who are working with private attorneys.

Concern for the well-being of children who live with only one of their parents and a desire to reduce the costs to taxpayers of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, prompted Congress to pass the Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1984 and the Family Support Act of 1988. Child support enforcement laws have been strengthened and there have been many improvements to the Federal/State Child Support enforcement program. Major changes in the law which will be taking effect during the years between 1989 and 1994, include:

Immediate wage withholding by 1990 for *new* CSE cases unless both parents and/or the court agree to a different payment plan, and for all *existing* CSE cases at the request of either parent if the State agrees

by 1994 for **all** orders in the State unless both parents and/or the court agree to a different plan

Child support guidelines **must** be used after October 1989 unless it can be shown that to use them would be unjust or inappropriate in a particular case

Genetic testing must be provided in disputed paternity cases—at the request of either party after November 1989.

States must be able to review and modify CSE case orders—to comply with State guidelines at the request of either parent or the CSE office by October 1990

States must start periodic review and modification (if appropriate) of CSE cases by October 1993

We hope this booklet will help you to understand the laws and will assist you in obtaining your child support.

We dedicate this *Handbook* to the millions of parents and children who need and deserve to receive fair and full child support payments.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Are you a single parent—divorced, separated or never married—with children to support?

Do you need help obtaining a child support order?

Do you need help collecting child support payments from the parent who is under a legal order to pay?

Federal law requires States to use proven enforcement methods on behalf of families who apply for child support enforcement services. States may handle support cases differently, however, and questions you have about how the child support enforcement law will work for you should be answered by your local child support enforcement office.

The Child Support Enforcement (CSE) program is usually run by State and local human services departments. To learn more about the program or to apply for child support services, call your local CSE office. Check the county listings in your telephone directory to get the telephone number, or call or write to the State CSE agency listed at the back of this *Handbook*.

For the most part, child support enforcement problems are handled through local family and domestic courts, according to State and local laws and practices. States use *administrative procedures** or other expedited legal procedures for establishing and enforcing support orders to avoid some of the long delays which are common in court proceedings.

In this *Handbook*, you will find the facts you need about child support enforcement: the basic steps to follow and what enforcement methods get the best results. Whether you are working with your State or local CSE program or your own attorney, knowing these things can help you collect the child support that is due your children. The Handbook is organized so that you can refer directly to the sections you need.

Your State's CSE program is available to help you:

- Find the absent parent: Location

* Words in italics are defined in the Glossary beginning on page 31.

- Establish legal fatherhood for children: **Paternity**
- Establish the legal support order: **Obligation**
- Collect child support payments: **Enforcement**

The CSE program does not handle other problems that people often have along with child support problems. Problems such as property settlement, visitation and custody are not, by themselves, support enforcement issues, and by law, the CSE program cannot extend its services to enforce court orders pertaining to them. They must be handled at the local level with the help of a private attorney.

The person you will be working with at your enforcement office may be called a caseworker, investigator, enforcement worker, collection specialist, or child support worker. The term "caseworker" will be used throughout this Handbook. Also, the words "court" or "judge" mean the official agency having the authority in your State to make legally binding decisions.

Remember: the more you know about child support enforcement, the more you take an active role in getting information to your caseworker and ask questions about how your case is being handled, the more success you will have in obtaining regular and full child support payments for your children.

Who can get help?

Any parent or person with *custody* of a child who needs help to establish child support or medical support obligation or to collect support payments from the *non-custodial* parent can apply for child support enforcement services. People who receive assistance under the *Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)* or *Medicaid* programs or *Federally-assisted Foster Care* programs automatically receive child support enforcement services.

Where do I apply for help in obtaining child support?

Through your local child support enforcement (CSE) office. The number can be found in your local telephone directory usually under the State/County social services agency.

Is there an application fee?

Those receiving assistance under the AFDC, Medicaid or Foster Care program do not have to pay for CSE services. For all others a fee of up to \$25 is charged, although some States absorb all or part of the fee or collect payment from the non-custodial parent.

Are there any other costs?

Child support agencies can recover all or part of the actual costs of their services from those who are not AFDC recipients. These can include the cost of legal work done by agency attorneys and costs for locating an absent parent. Such costs may be deducted from the child support that is collected or may be collected from the non-custodial parent. Not all States recover the costs of their services. Your local CSE office can tell you more based on the practices of your State and the characteristics of your case.

My State recovers costs from the custodial parent. How will I know how much will be deducted from my support checks?

Your caseworker should be able to give you an estimate of the costs involved in your case, and tell you approximately how much they will deduct from each check before sending it on to you.

Will there be an extra cost if the enforcement agency is dealing with the enforcement agency in another State?

Depending on the States involved, there may be extra costs if more than one State is handling your case. Ask your caseworker to estimate these costs, if any.

Will the enforcement agency keep track of my child support payments to make sure they keep coming? I am not on AFDC.

CSE offices are required to monitor payments to make sure they are made regularly and fully. But because offices vary in how closely they can monitor payments, it is also up to you to inform the agency if payments are late or in the wrong amount, or if you receive payments directly. When you monitor your own case, you can keep the CSE office informed so that they can act quickly if needed.

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I'm getting a divorce and my wife wants me to pay child support directly to her. Can I insist on paying through the CSE office?

Call the CSE office and ask them. You may certainly pay your child support by wage withholding or payroll deduction. If you do so, you will have a clear payment record and you will not have to write a check for each payment. If you are self employed, you should be able to arrange for an automatic transfer of funds. Your CSE office will be happy to answer your questions.

The father of my child lives across the State. I cannot afford to take the time off from work or travel there to appear in court. How can I get enforcement of my child support?

Usually, a court order entered in a State is enforceable throughout the State. Most local CSE offices handle enforcement in different court *jurisdictions* in the same State without your having to travel outside your own jurisdiction. Ask your local CSE office for details about how enforcement would work in your case.

I am applying for assistance under AFDC. Do I have to seek child support from the children's father?

As a condition of eligibility for AFDC, you must help the CSE office with their efforts to identify and collect child support from the father. If the State is able to collect child support on behalf of your children, you will receive up to the first \$50 of current support collected each month without a decrease in your assistance payment. The rest of the child support payment will go towards reimbursing the State and Federal governments for AFDC payments made to your family.

I am applying for AFDC, but I am afraid that the father may try to harm me or the children if I tell a caseworker who he is. What should I do?

Under certain conditions the AFDC authorities may agree that you have good cause for refusing to identify and help locate the father. You will have an opportunity to explain the situation to your caseworker and provide supporting information.

My children and I need money now. Their father left us ten years ago. Will they still try to find him?

By law, the CSE office must try to find the absent parent. Be sure you give them any information you have about where he might be.

If they can't find him, does that mean I can't get AFDC?

No. You will get AFDC if you are trying to help, and AFDC payments are made to you while the CSE office tries to obtain support. If the CSE office does collect child support from him, you will receive up to the first \$50 of current support that he pays each month in addition to your AFDC payment.

What does the child support enforcement agency need to know?

No matter where you start—establishing who the father is, finding the absent parent, establishing or enforcing a support order—the CSE office must have all the pertinent facts in order to pursue your case successfully. Be assured that the information you give will be treated in confidence.

What documents do I need to bring to the enforcement agency?

Whatever you have of the following information and documents will help the CSE office to locate the absent parent, establish paternity, establish and/or enforce your child support case:

- name, address and social security number of the absent parent
- children's birth certificates
- your child support order
- your divorce decree or separation agreement
- name and address of current or recent employer of the absent parent
- names of friends and relatives, names of organizations to which the absent parent might belong
- information about the absent parent's income and assets—payslips, tax returns, bank accounts, investments or property holdings
- information about your income and assets
- if paternity is an issue, written statements (letters or notes) in which the alleged father has said or implied that the child is his

I'm the non-custodial parent. I love my kids. I pay my child support. About half the time when I go to pick them up for my weekend, my ex-wife has made other plans for them. It's not fair that the State will enforce my child support obligation but not do anything about my rights.

Although child support and visitation are separate issues, many States have tried to work out some way of helping with visitation problems. Check with your CSE office to see what resources are available to you and to find out about laws which address custody and visitation.

II. FINDING THE ABSENT PARENT: LOCATION

To establish the paternity of a child, to obtain an order for support, and in most cases, to enforce that order, you must know where the absent parent lives or works. When a legal claim is made by one person against another, the *defendant* must be given adequate notice of the legal action taken and the steps necessary to protect his or her rights. To notify the *absent parent* in advance—either by certified mail or in person—child support enforcement officials must have a correct address. If you do not have the address, the CSE office can help you find it.

I think the children's father is still in the area. What information will the enforcement office need to find him?

Most important is his social security number and his current employer's name and address; also helpful are the names, addresses and phone numbers of any relatives, friends, or past employers who might know where he works or lives. Leads might also come from the names of local clubs or organizations to which he belongs and it may help to know where he is likely to be spending his free time. Finally, information about local creditors, such as banks or utility companies might yield a home address.

What if the absent parent cannot be found locally?

Your CSE office will ask the *State Parent Locator Service* (SPLS) to continue the search. Using the social security number, the SPLS will check the records of other State agencies such as motor vehicle registration, unemployment insurance, income tax, and correctional facilities. If the SPLS search finds that the parent has moved to another State, it can ask the other State to search. At the same time, it can send a request to the *Federal Parent Locator Service* (FPLS).

What resources does the FPLS have?

With certain minimum information such as the absent parent's name and social security number, the FPLS can search for a current address in the records of the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of Defense, the National Personnel Records Center, the Social Security Administration, and the Veterans Administration. Any information found is sent back to the State or local enforcement agency.

LOCATION

What if I don't have the social security number?

Places where you might find the social security number can be overlooked. Check hospital records if the absent parent was a patient, police records, bank accounts, old insurance policies, credit cards, paystips, or State and Federal income tax returns. If you and the father filed a joint Federal income tax return in the last 3 years, the CSE office, through the FPLS, can find the absent parent's social security number even without a copy of the tax return. Also, past employers or business associates may have the number. If you still cannot find the social security number, your caseworker can try to find it by using the FPLS. To do this, the caseworker will need the parent's place and date of birth, and the names of the parent's mother and father.

Can I or my lawyer directly ask the FPLS to find an address for the other parent?

No. You or your private attorney can submit a request to use the FPLS only through the State child support enforcement agency.

Can State and Federal location efforts be made at the same time?

es. For instance, a search can be initiated by the State to another State and to the FPLS at the same time.

Can enforcement agencies use the Federal income tax return to find out where the absent parent lives and what he or she makes?

Yes. Under closely monitored conditions, the IRS, working through the State and Federal Child Support Enforcement agencies, can disclose certain information from the tax return to the child support office which will be helpful in finding an absent parent and determining his or her financial assets. The information can only be used for the purpose of enforcing child support payments.

What will happen after I give the caseworker the current address of the absent parent?

The worker will verify the home and work addresses, then may ask the parent to come to the CSE office for an interview, or notify him that legal action may be taken.

The father of my child is in the military, but I don't know where he is stationed. Can the enforcement agency find him?

Yes. The FPLS can provide the current duty station of a parent who is in any of the uniformed services.

III. ESTABLISHING FATHERHOOD: PATERNITY

A support order cannot be established for a child until the alleged father either admits or is proved to be the father. How the legal relationship of paternity is established is a matter of State law. In nearly all States, the father can acknowledge his paternity by signing a written admission or *consent agreement*. Most fathers will do this when confronted, so that very few cases actually go to court. The agreement, usually signed under oath, is filed with the court and becomes a legal document establishing paternity. If the man will not admit that he is the father, the case may have to go to trial.

If you want the father to assume legal responsibility for the child, it is important to establish paternity as soon as possible. While CSE offices must try to establish paternity for any child up to the child's eighteenth birthday, it is best to establish paternity soon after the child's birth. It will be easier to locate the father and information needed will be more accurate and fresh.

What are the benefits of establishing paternity?

Once paternity is established legally, your child gains most of the legal rights and privileges that a child born within marriage has. Among them may be rights to inheritance, rights to the father's medical and life insurance benefits, and to social security and possibly veterans' benefits. The child also has a chance to develop a relationship with the father, and to develop a sense of identity and connection to the "other half" of his or her family.

What will the enforcement caseworker need to know to try to establish paternity?

The caseworker needs as much information as you can give about the alleged father and the facts about your relationship with him, your pregnancy, and the birth of your child. Some of these questions may be personal. Be assured that States must keep the information that you give confidential. The caseworker will also want to know whether he ever provided any financial support, or in any other way acknowledged—through letters or gifts—that the child was his. A picture of the alleged father with the child is helpful, as well as any information from others who could confirm your relationship with him.

What if he denies he is the father, or says he's not sure?

Paternity can be determined by the evidence presented to the court, including highly accurate genetic tests, often blood tests, given to the man and to the mother and the child. These tests can exclude wrongly accused men and can also indicate the likelihood of paternity if he is not excluded. After October 1989, all parties in a contested paternity case must submit to genetic tests at the request of either party. This is one reason why so few paternity cases go to trial.

If blood tests are necessary, who pays for them?

This varies. In some States, if the father is identified by the tests, he must assume his financial responsibility at once and pay for the tests. In other States, if the mother is not an AFDC recipient, she may have to help pay for them.

What happens if I am not sure who the father is?

When more than one man could be the father of a baby, each will be required to take a genetic test. These tests are highly accurate now, and it is almost always possible to determine who fathered a baby and to rule out any one who did not.

My boyfriend is on a military base abroad and I am about to have his child. How do I go about establishing paternity and obtaining an order for support?

You can apply for child support enforcement services at your local CSE office. If he is willing to sign documents to admit paternity and agree to support, then enforcement can proceed by a wage withholding order. If an absent parent is on a naval ship or lives on a military base abroad and will not admit paternity, it may be necessary to wait until he returns to the United States for blood work to be done.

The father of my child said I would never get a paternity judgment on him because he'd just leave the State. What happens in this case?

If the accused father is found and fails to respond to a formal *complaint* served upon him, a *default judgment* can be entered in court establishing paternity. At the same time, a court order for support may be issued. This order can be enforced in other States.

PATERNITY

My boyfriend and I are still in high school, and our baby is 6 months old. Why should legal paternity be established if the father has no money to support the child?

Because when the father gets older and starts working, he will be able to support the child. Having paternity established legally, even if the order for support is delayed, means collecting child support will be easier later on.

What happens after paternity is established?

The caseworker may discuss the child's needs with the father and what he is required to pay according to the State guidelines. Or, the parents may work out the terms of support with each other and sign a *consent agreement*, which, in most States, will need to be approved by the court. The agreement is made into a legal order spelling out how much is to be paid, and when. The court may also include at this time the exact terms of custody, visitation, and other parental rights. If you cannot work out an acceptable agreement that is in the best interests of the child, you or the father can request a formal hearing.

IV. ESTABLISHING THE SUPPORT ORDER: OBLIGATION

A legal order for child support spelling out the amount of the *obligation* and how it is to be paid is required for enforcement when and if it becomes necessary. Data from the United States Census show that of the 8–9 million women caring for children with no father present, only about half have legally binding support orders.

Establishing an enforceable support order depends on how much success you, your caseworker or lawyer have in several critical areas: locating the absent parent, identifying his or her ability to pay (both present and potential), and determining the financial needs of the child.

States are required to have support *guidelines* available to all people who set child support amounts. Most State guidelines consider the needs of the child, other dependents, and the ability of the parents to pay. States must use the guidelines unless they can be shown to be unfair to the child.

States today have arrangements for establishing the support order by an *administrative procedure* or other expedited legal procedure, in which the case does not have to be heard by a judge in court. The hearing may be conducted by a master or a referee of the court, or by an administrative hearings officer.

An agreement made between the parents and approved by this kind of agency generally has the same effect as one established in court, and is legally binding on the parties concerned. The agreement that the parents make should contain provisions that enhance the child's present and future overall well-being. It may be useful to discuss these issues together if you can, or with a mediator or family counselor. You can call your CSE office to find out about your State's guidelines.

How does the caseworker find out about the other parent's income or assets? I know very little about what he owns or makes.

The caseworker will make every possible effort to identify the parent's employment, property owned, and any other sources of income or assets. This information will usually be verified before the support order is final.

OBLIGATION

I'm sure the other parent is willing to pay support. Can we make an agreement between ourselves and present it to the court?

If parents can cooperate and agree, all the better. You can get help from a lawyer, divorce mediator or family counselor. The court's sole interest in your agreement is to see that it is fair to all parties, that the welfare of the children is protected, and that the agreement conforms with the guidelines.

Are the earnings of both parents considered in setting the amount of support?

In some State guidelines, the custodial parent's earnings are considered in setting the amount of the support order. Check with your CSE office. Laws vary from State to State, but parents who can work out a fair support agreement between themselves will have a better chance of having their wishes recognized in court.

My wife and I are working out a joint custody agreement. How would the court decide the amount of child support for each of us?

Naturally, that depends a lot on the terms of your agreement. But the same two rules of thumb would apply: each parent's ability to pay and the needs of the child.

My husband's income is enough to support us without a sudden drop in our standard of living after the divorce. Do the courts consider this?

These decisions, again, are based on the State's guidelines. Of course, parents can try to have the amount of support changed if their financial situations change.

I just heard that my son's mother has had three promotions in the last four years but the child support is still like it was six years ago. Is there some way to find out when she has a raise?

In many States, CSE offices will already accept a request to review and modify child support orders according to child support guidelines. Soon all CSE offices will review and modify (if appropriate) child support orders routinely if the family is receiving AFDC assistance or at the request of either parent in non-AFDC families. Ask your caseworker for information about modifying your court order.

What can I do to get my support increased if it is too low?

If you go to your CSE office for a modification of your order, they will need to determine the present income and assets of the *non-custodial parent*, together with your financial situation and the needs of the child. The agency can then seek a legal modification.

My ex-husband has remarried and has another family to support. How will this affect the support that my children are due?

The courts generally hold that even though the non-custodial parent acquires a second family, this does not eliminate his or her responsibility to the first family. In some States, the judge may grant the non-custodial parent a decrease in the obligation based on guidelines for child support. You should be notified beforehand and given an opportunity to contest the proposed change. Other factors which could lower the support order include steady employment of the child or poor health or decreased earning ability of the non-custodial parent.

I can't get health insurance with my job but my ex-husband gets good benefits where he works. Can he be required to carry the children on his insurance?

Yes. CSE offices are now required to include *medical support* in any petition for child support when health care coverage is available to the non-custodial parent at a reasonable cost. Court orders can also be modified to include health care coverage if they were written before this law took effect, or if health care coverage became available to the non-custodial parent after the court order was established.

The father of my child is in jail. Can I get support?

The father continues to be obligated for support, and past-due support may accumulate while he is in jail. But unless he has other assets, such as property or any income such as wages from a work-release program, it is unlikely that support can be collected while he is in jail. However, your support order may be modified so that payment is deferred until he is released and working.

OBLIGATION

After I pay my child support, I don't even have enough money for decent food. When my child support order was set I was making about \$300 a month more than I am now. Can I get the order changed?

Check first with your CSE office to see if your child support obligation is in compliance with State guidelines and if they are able to help you with a modification. Also, a court has the power to change the amount of a child support order, and you can petition for a hearing based on evidence about the change in your income. In this case, it would be helpful to have the services of an attorney. Your local legal services office or legal aid society may be able to provide low-cost counsel to parents who cannot afford a private attorney.

V. ENFORCING THE SUPPORT ORDER: ENFORCEMENT

A main objective of the Child Support Enforcement program is to make sure that child support payments are made regularly and in the correct amount. While many *non-custodial parents* are willing to pay child support and continue to be involved in their children's lives, lapses of payment do occur. When they do, a family's budget can be quickly and seriously threatened, and the anxiety the *custodial parent* feels can easily disrupt the family's life.

For this reason, Congress has decided that *immediate wage withholding* should be included in all court orders unless another arrangement is shown to be better. The schedule by which States must use immediate wage withholding is in the Foreword at the beginning of this booklet. In the meantime, all States allow, and some States require, child support court orders to provide for wage withholding as soon as the order is signed. If the non-custodial parent is regularly employed, wage withholding for child support can be treated like other forms of payroll deduction—income tax, social security, union dues or any payment an employee is required to make.

A non-custodial parent can also ask for *wage withholding* to fulfill a child support obligation. This way there is a complete record of payments and there is no need to write a child support check weekly or monthly.

States must be able to withhold wages when the non-custodial parent misses making payments equaling no more than one month's child support. Recent court orders will include that provision, or a provision for immediate wage withholding. Older child support orders can be revised to include a wage withholding order.

If payments are skipped or stop altogether, especially if the non-custodial parent is self-employed, works for cash or commissions, changes employment, or moves frequently, the CSE office will try to enforce the support order.

At first, the CSE office will encourage voluntary payment. Sometimes, regular payments are made in response to monthly billings or telephone reminders by the CSE office. Some CSE offices send out delinquency notices or use mailgrams to elicit regular payments.

States have laws which allow them to use other enforcement techniques, such as *offset* of State and Federal income tax refunds, *liens* on real or personal property owned by the debtor, orders to withhold and deliver property that may satisfy the debt, or a seizure and sale of property with the proceeds from the sale applied to the support debt. Some of these methods can be used by the CSE office without directly involving the courts.

The children's father refuses to pay child support, but owns a good deal of property in the county. Can a lien be issued at the same time the order for support is established in court?

Yes. But you must remember a *lien* on property does not by itself result in the immediate collection of any money. It only prevents the owner from selling, transferring, or borrowing against the property until the child support debt is paid. However, the presence of a property lien may encourage the non-custodial parent to pay the past-due child support in order to retain clear title to the property.

Is it possible to collect the support payments from personal property the absent parent has?

Under some State laws, the enforcement official can issue an order to withhold and deliver. The order is sent to any person, company, or institution that is holding property belonging to the debtor. The property may be a bank account, investments, or personal property. The order is served on the holder of the property, who must then deliver it either to the enforcement agency or to the court that issued the support order. Some States permit the property to be attached or seized and sold to pay the debt. Some States require non-custodial parents with a poor payment history to pledge property as a guarantee of payment. Non-payment results in forfeiture of the property.

I am working with a private attorney. Can she request wage withholding for my child support payments?

Yes. All support orders issued or modified since 1985 must include a provision for wage withholding when *arrears* occur. This will allow you to collect support through wage withholding if you use a private attorney rather than the CSE office. States set the conditions under which wage withholding applies and they can, if they choose, apply withhold-

ing to other kinds of income in addition to wages, such as bonuses, commissions, retirement, rental or interest income, for example.

Can I have the wage withholding applied to my existing child support order?

Yes, you can apply for the wage withholding through your local CSE office or your attorney. Though there are limits on how much of a person's check can be withheld, wage withholding can be used for both on-going support and arrearages. Ask the enforcement agency how this can be done.

Why can't my attorney work on my child support problem while I am receiving services from the child support program?

In many States, your attorney can work with the child support program on your behalf. If the attorney and the child support office work together, they must coordinate their efforts or time can be wasted through unnecessary duplication of services and conflicting enforcement methods and decisions. Check with your CSE office to see whether you can work with an attorney while you use their services.

My child's mother works for a big company and has moved several times in her job. Can automatic withholding work in this case?

Yes. States must recognize the wage withholding orders from other States, and continue the wage withholding as ordered, without regard to where the absent parent or the custodial parent and children live.

My ex-husband has a good job and is willing to have the payments deducted from his paycheck, but his employer won't do it. What can I do?

Under Federal law, an employer must withhold the support if ordered to, or if the non-custodial parent requests it. If you run into problems with a reluctant employer, seek the assistance of your CSE office.

The children's father works irregularly and is paid in cash. Wage withholding won't work for me. What will?

Automatic billing, telephone reminders, and delinquency notices from your CSE office might convince him to make regular payments. Other techniques, such as property attachment, credit bureau reporting, tax

ENFORCEMENT

refund offset, *garnishment*, and liens might work for the arrearages. If none of these is successful, your enforcement office can take the case to court for stronger enforcement methods.

My children's father owns a cross-country moving van and a nice home. Why won't the child support office put a lien on either one?

Most States will not put a lien on a primary residence or attach property which a person needs to make a living. Talk to your caseworker about what kinds of property are available for liens and attachment in your State.

My ex-spouse is in the Army. How do I go about having child support payments deducted from a paycheck?

If a service member is not meeting a support obligation and will not agree to have payments allotted from his or her paycheck, a military official (usually the finance officer) can have the payments deducted in accordance with the support order. Again, there are limits on the amount of the check that can be deducted. Ask your CSE office for information on how to start this action.

My children's father retired from the Navy when he was only 40, just before our divorce. Can his military retirement check be garnished for back child support?

Yes, it is possible to garnish the wages of active, reserve and retired members of the military and Federal government civilian employees. With the assistance of your enforcement caseworker or lawyer, you can get a garnishment order from the court and send it with a certified copy of your child support order to the designated official. Your local enforcement office can tell you the exact procedures and follow through on your behalf.

The children's mother works for the U.S. Postal Service. She was recently transferred and stopped making payments. What do I have to do to get them started again?

If you cannot learn from the local postal officials where she has transferred, your CSE office can locate her by asking the *Federal Parent Locator Service* to search Federal records. When the address of her new duty station is verified, the CSE office can pursue wage withholding for

child support. The wage withholding law can be used for all employees of the Federal Government.

Can past-due child support be taken from the State income tax refund?

Under Federal law, all States with State income tax must offset State income tax refunds for past-due support owed to both AFDC recipients and non-AFDC recipients.

How does the non-paying parent find out that his or her State tax refund will be taken?

The State must notify the non-custodial parent in advance of taking the action. The notification specifies the amount owed in arrears and the amount to be offset. It also tells whom to contact if the person wants to contest the offset.

Can Federal income tax refunds be offset the same way?

Yes, States can request an offset of Federal income tax refunds for past-due support of over \$500 owed to persons not receiving AFDC as well as over \$150 owed to AFDC recipients.

The children's father lost his job and is collecting unemployment compensation. Can child support payments be deducted and sent to me?

Yes. Unemployment compensation, and other State and Federal benefits can be tapped for child support. Ask your caseworker for details about the procedures, and make sure you give your caseworker information immediately if you learn about changes in the father's employment situation.

Doesn't the Internal Revenue Service also have methods it can use to help us get the support owed?

Yes, there are several, but they are only available through the authority of the Federal/State Child Support Enforcement program. Your caseworker may be able to make a request for use of the IRS "full collection" technique, or for an offset of the absent parent's tax refund for past-due amounts. Contact your caseworker for more information.

ENFORCEMENT

By my own calculation, my husband owes me \$3,475 in past due child support. Can the enforcement agency try to collect it for me?

If this support was owed before the CSE office became involved in your case, the CSE office has to verify the amount owed. Then it may have to present the documentation to a court before it can start collection procedures. While it is doing this, the agency can try to collect support payments for current months.

I heard that my children's father is buying a very expensive car. He owes over \$5,000 in back support. Can the credit agency be told this?

Yes. By Federal law, the CSE office must report the amount of child support owed if the amount is over \$1,000 and the information is requested by the consumer credit agency. The CSE office can report lesser amounts, if it chooses. Some CSE offices now report the amount of child support owed automatically without a request from the consumer credit agency. Consult your caseworker for more information.

The other parent does not work regularly and repeatedly falls behind in his child support payments. Is there any way the court can establish regular payment?

As mentioned before, property liens and attachments might work. In certain cases Federal law also authorizes that the parent be required to post security, bond, or other guarantee to cover support obligations. These may be in the form of money or property. Ask your enforcement caseworker if these might be applied to your case.

My ex-wife has declared bankruptcy and says she doesn't have to pay child support. Is that true?

Bankruptcy does not necessarily end the child support obligation. Child Support *arrears* are not discharged by bankruptcy. In fact, a claim for child support makes the custodial parent a creditor and child support claims may be given priority over other creditors' claims. It is a good idea for the child support agreement to state that bankruptcy will not end the child support obligation.

My daughter's father says that since he gives her gifts and money he does not have to pay child support.

Courts generally will not allow gifts to a child to take the place of child support, and require that child support payments are carried out as ordered by the child support agreement. In some cases, if the voluntary payment is larger than a normal gift would be, a court may decide to credit the payment as a child support payment.

Will the Federal Government step in to enforce a difficult child support case?

No. State and local offices are responsible for establishing paternity and establishing and enforcing child support orders. The Federal Government tries to make sure that States are using all appropriate enforcement techniques. It pays much of the cost of the program, issues policies, offers technical assistance, and reviews State programs for compliance with Federal requirements. If a State program is not meeting Federal standards, the Federal Office will help State personnel to correct the shortcoming. If necessary, the Federal Government can financially penalize a State for not following Federal regulations.

The child support office is not enforcing my case. Can I take it to a Federal Court?

If your caseworker and State CSE office have had no response to their requests for enforcement in another *jurisdiction*, it is possible for the case to be heard by a Federal court. This is not done often and the decision to use a Federal court will be made by the Federal Regional Office of Child Support Enforcement at the request of your caseworker and the State enforcement office. If you are not satisfied with the services you are receiving in your local CSE office, you can ask your State CSE Agency for help. State Agency addresses are listed at the end of the Handbook.

My children are over eighteen and don't get child support any more, but there is still a \$10,000 arrearage owed to me for support that was never paid. Will the CSE office collect that money for me?

If State law allows your State to collect support for a child who is no longer a minor, the CSE office is required by Federal law to collect the back support. Ask your CSE office for more information.

Can my children be provided for if my ex-husband dies?

A well written child support order should provide for continued support if the non-custodial parent should die. The child support payments should be defined as a claim against his estate. The children can also be named as beneficiaries in your ex-husband's life insurance policy or will.

The children's mother lives in another State and we don't know when she is buying something. Every time the kids come home from there they talk about her new car or stove or something, but she still won't pay her child support. Why can she get credit if the courts know she owes her kids so much?

CSE offices must make child support debts of over \$1000 available to credit bureaus when that information is requested. Credit bureaus in some States routinely request information about child support debts. The State notifies the non-custodial parent if the overdue debt will be reported to the credit reporting network. That sometimes is enough to encourage the non-custodial parent to pay the overdue support.

VI. WORKING ACROSS STATE LINES: INTERSTATE COOPERATION

The most difficult child support cases to pursue are those in which the parent obligated to pay child support lives in one State and the child and custodial parent live in another. However, all States are required to pursue child support enforcement, including location, paternity establishment, establishment of support obligations, as vigorously for children who live outside their borders as for those under their own *jurisdiction*. Federal law is requiring States to work through the necessary steps that lead to enforcement within specific timeframes after September, 1990. These requirements should eliminate much of the time that has been lost in moving cases from one State or office to another.

Although State enforcement agencies must cooperate with each other in handling requests for assistance, in practice, it is not a simple matter for one State to enforce automatically the court orders of another State. Each State is self-governing, which means each has an independent court system with varying laws, practices and traditions. Matters of family law have traditionally been considered the province of State and local governments, and, in general, citizens fall under the personal jurisdiction of courts where they live.

The primary legal tool for interstate enforcement is the Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act (URESA). All States have their own URESA laws, and rely heavily on them for pursuing enforcement in other States. The basic mechanism of URESA is the two-state lawsuit in which the enforcement official (or the private lawyer) files a petition with the enforcement agency or court in another State. Where the URESA provisions between the two States are compatible, the law can be used to establish paternity, locate an absent parent, establish, modify, or enforce a support order.

Interstate *wage withholding* can be used to enforce a support order in another State if the *non-custodial parent's* employer is known. When this is the case, weeks of waiting for court dates can be saved. With interstate wage withholding, the CSE office in the State where the non-custodial parent lives will make sure that a wage withholding order from another State contains all the information required by their State laws and will forward it to the non-custodial parent's employer. The order does not have to go through the courts as it would with a URESA or interstate

INTERSTATE

child support enforcement petition. State laws vary and you will need to ask your caseworker whether this technique will work in your case.

States all have an office, the Central Registry, to receive incoming interstate child support cases, to review them to make sure that the information given is complete, to distribute them to the right local office and to respond to status inquiries from child support offices in other States. Standard forms are available to make it easier for caseworkers to find the information they need to enforce a case, and for them to be sure they are supplying enough information for another State to enforce their case.

I know the address of my children's father in another State, and my caseworker sent a petition to establish my support order there. That was three month's ago, and still no support payments. What's wrong?

It may be any number of things: enforcement officials may not be able to serve notice on the non-custodial parent due to inadequate address information; if a hearing is necessary, it may take a while to get a court date. The demand for enforcement services is high and interstate pursuit is not a simple matter, but your caseworker is required to follow-up on your case if 90 days have passed since the last contact with the CSE office in the other State. Continue to keep in touch with your caseworker to resolve any delay or to provide any new information you may have.

I need to establish paternity for my child, and the father lives in another part of the country. How does this work?

Because State paternity laws vary widely, it can be difficult to establish paternity across State lines. Most States have either a *long arm statute* or other laws such as *URES*A that enable them to establish jurisdiction over the alleged father in another State, or refer the case for prosecution in the State where the father lives. If an attempt is being made to establish paternity according to the laws of the other State, the *URES*A petition sent to the State must include all the information required by the laws of that State, not the home State. Frequently, genetic tests or blood tests will be ordered to help the court in the other State determine paternity. Ask your caseworker for specific information about the laws in your State and the State where the other parent lives.

My caseworker filed a URESA petition for paternity. The father denied it, and the other court just dismissed the case. What went wrong?

A responding State should not dismiss a case without requesting the additional information needed to proceed, and the initiating State is required to provide that information in 30 days. Either party in a contested paternity action will be able to request blood or genetic testing after October of 1989. These are changes in the law. Ask your caseworker to reopen the case. Paternity may now be established until your child's 18th birthday.

If paternity is established in another state, will the support order also be entered in that State?

Yes. Ask your caseworker how this is done.

I have had to wait several months for my enforcement agency to get a reply to its request for location assistance in another State. Why does it take so long to get an answer?

Even though they try to be responsive, most enforcement agencies have a very high demand for their services and they have to set priorities among the cases they receive. A State's ability to act rapidly depends on the characteristics of the case, the quality of information received, and the amount of staff and other resources they have to devote to it. Be sure to follow up regularly with your caseworker to make sure that each State is responding within the time limits allowed.

As soon as the children's father is notified about enforcement, he moves. How will I ever be able to collect my support?

Many custodial parents feel angry when, after the absent parent is finally located and served notice of the enforcement action, he or she then moves on. Unquestionably, it is difficult to enforce child support payments when the non-custodial parent intentionally and continually moves to avoid paying. You may want to suggest that papers be served at the parent's place of work, then try to keep track of the parent's movements afterwards. Try to be an active participant in your own case. Whenever you learn that the absent parent has moved or has a new job, you should bring this information to the attention of your enforcement caseworker as soon as possible.

INTERSTATE

My former wife lives in another State. She owns an expensive car, jewelry, and several pieces of property. Would a URESA petition let me attach this property for child support?

This may be possible after a judgment is obtained in the State where she lives. Before filing the petition, your enforcement worker or lawyer may be able to see if a "withhold and deliver" or "attachment" of the property could be successfully carried out.

Will location and enforcement services cost more if my agency is dealing with another State? I am not receiving AFDC.

Possibly. It depends on what the CSE office has to do to find the absent parent and to establish regular payment. The more solid information and leads you provide, the more efficiently your case can be conducted. For non-AFDC cases, States vary in what they may charge for application and collection fees. Your caseworker should be able to tell you more about these costs in your particular case. (See discussion in Introduction.)

I don't have a support order. Can I have one established by petitioning the court where my ex-husband lives?

Yes, this can also be done by your CSE office in a URESA petition. An affidavit of all the pertinent facts, including the name and address of the responsible parent, details of your financial circumstances, and the needs of the child will be included. The petition will be mailed to the enforcement agency, the court, or the URESA official where the father lives. The court in the responding State will review this information together with information regarding the father's ability to pay and set the amount to be paid.

The father of my child has left the United States. How can I get my court order for child support enforced?

Check with your local CSE office and State CSE agency (at the address listed in the back of this *Handbook*). Many State CSE agencies have agreements with foreign countries to recognize child support judgments made in either country. You will need the same kind of information as is required for enforcement in this country and as much specific address information as you can find. If the non-custodial parent works for an American company, wage withholding might work even if the country

he lives in does not have any agreement to enforce an American State's order.

I checked with the CSE office, but my daughter's father lives in a country that has no agreement with any State to enforce child support obligations. Is there anything else to try?

The Office of Citizens Consular Services may be able to give you information about how to have the support order enforced in that country and how to obtain a list of attorneys there. That address is: Department of State, Office of Citizens Consular Services, Washington, D.C. 20520.

VII. CONCLUSION

The success you have in obtaining regular, adequate, and full child support payments depends to a great extent on how well you can make the child support enforcement system work for you. At the same time it is important to remember that not all the solutions to your child support problems are within your control. The legal rights and welfare of all parties must be carefully guarded, and sometimes this means that what is considered fair to one party is considered unfair to another.

Knowledge is power. The more you know about child support enforcement procedures where you and the non-custodial parent live, the better you will be able to exercise your rights and responsibilities under the law, and the more successful you will be in obtaining the support that rightfully belongs to your children. As you proceed with your enforcement case, it is a good idea to keep a written account of the actions taken and the outcomes of those actions. Do not hesitate to ask questions and make suggestions to your enforcement caseworker. If you are not satisfied with the actions taken on your behalf, you have recourse to the head of the county CSE office as well as to the Director of the State Child Support Enforcement agency. Keep in mind that it is always best to communicate the problem in writing.

An informed parent can make the child support enforcement system work. This, together with improvements that State enforcement programs, legislatures and the courts are making, can benefit millions of parents and their children.

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT TERMS

| | |
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| absent parent | the parent who does not live with or have custody of the child but does have responsibility for financial support. Non-custodial parent. |
| administrative procedure | method by which support orders are made and enforced by an executive agency rather than by courts and judges |
| Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) | assistance payments made on behalf of children who are deprived of the financial support of one of their parents by reason of death, disability, or continued absence (including desertion) from the home; known in many States as ADC, Aid to Dependent Children |
| arrearages | unpaid child support payments for past periods owed by a parent who is obligated to pay |
| assignment of support rights | a person receiving public assistance agrees to turn over to the State any right to child support, including arrearages, paid by the obligated parent in exchange for receipt of an AFDC grant and other benefits |
| complaint | written document filed in court in which the person initiating the action names the persons, allegations, and relief sought |
| consent agreement | voluntary written admission of paternity or responsibility for support |

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| custodial parent | person with legal custody and with whom the child lives; may be parent, other relative or someone else |
| custody | legal determination which establishes with whom a child shall live |
| default | failure of a defendant to file an answer, response, or appeal in a civil case within a certain number of days after having been served with a summons and complaint |
| default judgment | decision made by the court when the defendant fails to respond |
| defendant | person against whom a civil or criminal proceeding is begun |
| enforcement | obtaining payment of a child support or medical support obligation |
| Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS) | a service operated by the Office of Child Support Enforcement in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to assist the States in locating responsible persons for the purpose of obtaining child support payments; also used in cases of parental kidnapping related to custody and visitation determinations; FPLS obtains employer and home address information from Federal agencies |
| Federally-assisted Foster Care | A program, funded in part by the Federal government, under which a child is raised in a household by someone other than his or her own parent |
| garnishment | a legal proceeding whereby a portion of a person's wages or other assets is withheld and applied to payment of a debt |

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| genetic testing | analysis of inherited factors (usually by blood test) of mother, child and alleged father, which can help to prove or disprove that a particular man fathered a particular child |
| guidelines | a standard method for setting child support obligations based on the income of the parent(s) and other factors as determined by State law |
| immediate wage withholding | automatic deductions from income which start as soon as the agreement for support is established—see wage withholding |
| jurisdiction | legal authority which a court has over particular persons, certain types of cases, and in a defined geographical area |
| legal father | a man who is recognized by law as the male parent |
| lien | a claim upon property to prevent sale or transfer until a debt is satisfied |
| long arm statute | a law which permits one State to claim personal jurisdiction over someone who lives in another State |
| medicaid program | federally funded medical support for low income families |
| medical support | legal provision for payment of medical and dental bills—can be linked to a parent's access to medical insurance |
| non-custodial parent | parent who does not have primary custody of a child but who has a responsibility for financial support |
| obligation | amount of money to be paid as support by the responsible parent and the manner by which it is to be paid |

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| offset | amount of money taken from a parent's State or Federal income tax refund to satisfy a child support debt |
| order | direction of a magistrate, judge or properly empowered administrative officer |
| paternity judgement | legal determination of fatherhood |
| plaintiff | person who brings an action, complains or sues in a civil case |
| public assistance | money granted from the State/ Federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children program to a person or family for living expenses; eligibility based on need |
| State Parent Locator Service (SPLS) | a service operated by the State Child Support Enforcement Agencies to locate absent parents to establish paternity, and establish and enforce child support obligations. |
| URESA | Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act—a law which is enacted at the State level and which provides a mechanism for establishing and enforcing support obligations when the non-custodial parent lives in one State and the custodial parent and child(ren) live in another |
| visitation | the right of a non-custodial parent to visit or spend time with his or her children following separation or divorce |
| wage withholding | procedure by which automatic deductions are made from wage or income to pay some debt such as child support; may be voluntary or involuntary |

STATE CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT OFFICES

ALABAMA

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Human Resources
64 North Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36130
(205) 262-2734

ALASKA

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Revenue
550 West 7th Avenue, 4th Floor
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 276-3441

ARIZONA

Child Support Enforcement Administration
Department of Economic Security
2222 West Basanto
P.O. Box 6121—Suite Code 776A
Phoenix, AZ 85005
(602) 252-0236

ARKANSAS

Division of Child Support Enforcement
Arkansas Social Services
P.O. Box 3358
Little Rock, AR 72203
(501) 682-8388

CALIFORNIA

Child Support Program Management Branch
Department of Social Services
744 P Street—Mail Stop 9-011
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 322-8495

COLORADO

Division of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Social Services
1373 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203-1714
(303) 866-5594

CONNECTICUT

Bureau of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Human Resources
1049 Asylum Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
(203) 566-3093

DELAWARE

Division of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Health & Social Services
P.O. Box 904
New Castle, DE 19720
(302) 421-8300

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Office of Paternity & Child Support
Department of Human Services
3rd Floor—Suite 3013
425 I Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 724-5610

FLORIDA

Office of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Health & Rehabilitative Services
1217 Winewood Blvd, Building 3
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700
(904) 488-9900

GEORGIA

Office of Child Support Recovery
State Department of Human Resources
678 Peachtree Street NE, Room 529
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 894-4119

GUAM

Office of the Attorney General
Child Support Enforcement Office
Union Bank Building—Suite 309
194 Herman Cortes Avenue
Agaña, Guam 96910
(671) 477-2036

HAWAII

Child Support Enforcement Agency
Department of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 1860
Honolulu, HI 96805-1860
(808) 548-5779

IDAHO

Bureau of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Health and Welfare
450 West State Street
Towers Building—7th Floor
Boise, ID 83720
(208) 334-5710

ILLINOIS

Division of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Public Aid
Prescott E. Bloem Building
201 South Grand Avenue East
P.O. Box 19405
Springfield, IL 62794-9405
(317) 782-1366

INDIANA

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Public Welfare—4th Floor
141 South Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46225
(317) 232-4885

IOWA

Bureau of Collections
Iowa Department of Human Services
Hoover Building—5th Floor
Des Moines, IA 50319
(515) 281-5580

KANSAS

Child Support Enforcement Program
Department of Social & Rehabilitation Services
Biddle Building—300 South West Oakley Street
P.O. Box 497
Topeka, KS 66603
(913) 296-3237

KENTUCKY

Division of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Social Insurance
Cabinet for Human Resources
275 East Main Street, 6th Floor East
Frankfort, KY 40621
(502) 564-2385

LOUISIANA

Support Enforcement Services
Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 94065
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
(504) 342-4780

MAINE

Support Enforcement and Location Unit
Bureau of Social Welfare
Department of Human Services
State House, Station 11
Augusta, ME 04333
(207) 289-2886

MARYLAND

Child Support Enforcement Administration
Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-3979

MASSACHUSETTS

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Revenue
215 First Street
Cambridge, MA 02124
(617) 621-4200

MICHIGAN

Office of Child Support
Department of Social Services
300 South Capitol Avenue, Suite 621
P.O. Box 30037
Lansing, MI 48909
(317) 373-7570

MINNESOTA

Office of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Human Services
444 Lafayette Road—4th Floor
St. Paul, MN 55155-3846
(612) 296-2499

MISSISSIPPI

Child Support Division
State Department of Public Welfare
515 East Amite Street
P.O. Box 352
Jackson, MS 39205
(601) 354-0341 EXT. 503

MISSOURI

Division of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 1527
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1527
(314) 751-4301

MONTANA

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Social and
Rehabilitation Services
P.O. Box 5925
Helena, MT 59604
(406) 444-4614

NEBRASKA

Child Support Enforcement Office
Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 95026
Lincoln, NE 68509
(402) 471-9125

NEVADA

Child Support Enforcement Program
Department of Human Resources
2527 N. Carson Street—Capital Complex
Carson City, NV 89710
(702) 485-4744

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of Child Support Enforcement Services
Division of Welfare
Health & Welfare Building
6 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-4426

NEW JERSEY

Division of Economic Assistance
Department of Human Services
Bureau of Child Support and Paternity Programs
CN 716
Trenton, NJ 08625
(609) 588-2401

NEW MEXICO

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Human Services
P.O. Box 25109
Santa Fe, NM 87504
(505) 827-7200

NEW YORK

Office of Child Support Enforcement
New York State Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 14—1 Commerce Plaza
Albany, NY 12260
(518) 474-9081

NORTH CAROLINA

Child Support Enforcement Section
Division of Social Services
Department of Human Resources
437 North Harrington Street
Raleigh, NC 27603-1393
(919) 733-4120

NORTH DAKOTA

Child Support Enforcement Agency
Department of Human Services
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505
(701) 224-3582

OHIO

Bureau of Child Support
Department of Human Services
State Office Tower—27th Floor
30 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43266-0423
(614) 466-3233

OKLAHOMA

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Human Services
P.O. Box 25352
Oklahoma City, OK 73125
(405) 424-5871

OREGON

Recovery Services Section
Adult and Family Services Division
Department of Human Resources
P.O. Box 14506
Salem, OR 97309
(503) 378-5439

PENNSYLVANIA

Bureau of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Public Welfare
P.O. Box 8018
Harrisburg, PA 17105
(717) 787-3672 or 783-5184

PUERTO RICO

Child Support Enforcement Program
Department of Social Services
CALL Box 3349
San Juan, PR 00904
(809) 722-4731

RHODE ISLAND

Bureau of Family Support
Department of Human Services
77 Doranac Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 277-2409

SOUTH CAROLINA

Child Support Enforcement Division
Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 1520
Columbia, SC 29202-9988
(803) 737-5870

SOUTH DAKOTA

Office of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Social Services
700 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501-2291
(605) 773-3641

TENNESSEE

Child Support Services
Department of Human Services
Citizens Plaza Building—12th Floor
400 Deadrick Street
Nashville, TN 37239
(615) 741-1820

TEXAS

Child Support Enforcement Division
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548
(512) 463-2181

UTAH

Office of Recovery Services
Department of Social Services
120 North 200 West
P.O. Box 49011
Salt Lake City, UT 84143-0011
(801) 578-4400

VERMONT

Child Support Division
Department of Social Welfare
101 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05676
(802) 241-2910

VIRGIN ISLANDS

Support and Paternity Division
Department of Law
46 Norre Gade
St. Thomas, VI 00801
(809) 776-0372

VIRGINIA

Division of Support Enforcement Program
Department of Social Services
8007 Discovery Drive
Richmond, VA 23288
(804) 662-9297

WASHINGTON

Revenue Division
Department of Social & Health Services
Mail Stop HJ-31
Olympia, WA 98504
(206) 586-6111

WEST VIRGINIA

Child Advocate Office
Department of Human Services
1900 Washington Street, East
Charleston, WV 25305
(304) 348-3780

WISCONSIN

Division of Economic Support
Bureau of Child Support
1 West Wilson Street—Room 382
P.O. Box 7935
Madison, WI 53707-7935
(608) 266-1175

WYOMING

Child Support Enforcement Section
Division of Public Assistance and Social Services
State Department of Health & Social Services
Highway Bldg.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
(307) 777-7852

**REGIONAL OFFICES OF THE
OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT**

**REGION I—CONNECTICUT, MAINE, MASSACHUSETTS, NEW
HAMPSHIRE, RHODE ISLAND, VERMONT**

OCSE Regional Representative
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
23rd Floor, Room 2303
Boston, MA 02203
(617) 565-2463

**REGION II—NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY, PUERTO RICO, VIRGIN
ISLANDS**

OCSE Regional Representative
Federal Building, Room 4048
26 Federal Plaza
New York, NY 10278
(212) 264-2890

**REGION III—DELAWARE, MARYLAND, PENNSYLVANIA,
VIRGINIA, WEST VIRGINIA, DISTRICT OF
COLUMBIA**

OCSE Regional Representative
P.O. Box 8436
3535 Market Street, Rm. 4119 MS/15
Philadelphia, PA 19101
(215) 596-1396

**REGION IV—ALABAMA, FLORIDA, GEORGIA, KENTUCKY,
MISSISSIPPI, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH
CAROLINA, TENNESSEE**

OCSE Regional Representative
101 Marietta Tower, Suite 821
Atlanta, GA 30323
(404) 331-5733

**REGION V—ILLINOIS, INDIANA, MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA,
OHIO, WISCONSIN**

OCSE Regional Representative
105 W. Adams Street
20th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603
(312) 353-4237

**REGION VI—ARKANSAS, LOUISIANA, NEW MEXICO,
OKLAHOMA, TEXAS**

OCSE Regional Representative
1200 Main Tower Building
Suite 1700
Dallas, TX 75202
(214) 767-9648

REGION VII—IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA

OCSE Regional Representative
601 East 12th Street
Federal Building, Room 515
Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 426-5159

**REGION VIII—COLORADO, MONTANA, NORTH DAKOTA,
SOUTH DAKOTA, UTAH, WYOMING**

OCSE Regional Representative
Federal Office Building, Rm. 1185
1961 Stout Street
Denver, CO 80294
(303) 844-5646

REGION IX—ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, HAWAII, NEVADA, GUAM

OCSE Regional Representative
50 United Nations Plaza
Mail Stop 351
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 556-4415

REGION X—ALASKA, IDAHO, OREGON, WASHINGTON

OCSE Regional Representative

2201 Sixth Avenue

Mail Stop RX-70

Seattle, WA 98121

(206) 442-2775

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT RECORDS

Custodial Parent _____

Address _____

Names of Dependent Children

Dates of Birth

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Noncustodial Parent _____

Address(es) _____

Social Security Number

Date and Place of Birth

Dates

Employer(s) _____

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Child Support Enforcement Office _____

Enforcement caseworker _____

Case Number _____

State Enforcement Agency _____

Lawyer _____

Courts:

Custodial Parent _____

Noncustodial Parent _____

Present Support Obligation: \$ _____ To be paid: _____

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT CASE LOG

Action Taken

Date

Outcome

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no barcode

For more information on how the child support system works in your State, contact your State Child Support Enforcement agency. For technical information on program management topics, write the National Child Support Enforcement Reference Center, Office of Child Support Enforcement, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, Washington, D.C. 20447.